



# Inspections of Existing Building

Land Development Services (LDS), Department of Code Compliance (DCC),  
Fire and Rescue Department/Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM), Office of  
the County Attorney (OCA)

October 26, 2021



# Board Matter (Chair McKay/Sup. Smith)

- Investigate what current resources and capabilities exist for voluntary inspections of aging buildings to enhance safety
- Identify possibilities for the County to utilize, should more resources in the future be identified
- This should also include a review of best practices in other jurisdictions
- Evaluate, under the existing Virginia Maintenance Code, what options exist, including at the state level, to ensure buildings are proactively maintained under State Code
- Report back to a Land Use Policy Committee meeting in the last quarter of 2021



# Background: Collaborators

- Department of Code Compliance
- Fire and Rescue Department, Office of the Fire Marshal
- Office of the County Attorney
- Land Development Services
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Neighboring building officials, namely Prince William County, Hanover and the City of Alexandria



# Background – Building Stock > 75-feet

Building Age Category	Number of Buildings
5 – 10 years	13
10 – 15 years	44
15 – 20 years	74
20 – 25 years	38
25 – 30 years	15
30 – 35 years	100
35 – 40 years	41
40 years and older	46
Unknown	8

*210  
buildings  
in focus*

*LDS/GIS worked  
with DTA to  
compile this data.*



# Background: Uniform Statewide Building Code

Code	Purpose	Official	Department
Virginia Construction Code	Commission Safe Buildings	Building Official	Land Development Services
Virginia Maintenance Code	Assure Safe Buildings in Perpetuity	Maintenance Official	Department of Code Compliance
Virginia Fire Safety Regulations	Assure Fire Safety at Building Commissioning and Perpetuity	Fire Official/Fire Marshal	Fire and Rescue Department, Office of the Fire Marshal

*Where the Virginia Construction Code assures safe buildings at the end of construction, the Virginia Maintenance Code along with the Virginia Fire Safety Regulations create the framework for safe buildings throughout their life.*



# Board Matter Request #1

Investigate what **current resources and capabilities** exist for voluntary inspections of aging buildings to enhance safety

- DCC Complaint-based approach with LDS & OFM provides subject matter expertise.
- Property owner could voluntarily hire a private professional to conduct an inspection.
- Could outreach to 210 buildings to suggest voluntary inspections.



# Board Matter Request #2

Identify **possibilities** for the County to utilize, should more resources in the future be identified

- DCC should track such requests.
- County could augment staff with contract services.
- Board of Supervisors could provide additional positions.



# Board Matter Request #3

This should also include a review of best practices in other jurisdictions

- The International Building Code and the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code does not include a “Building Recertification” program.  
*(County staff are currently engaged with the DHCD and the International Code Council (ICC) on this matter.)*
- Very few in US, namely:
  - Miami-Dade & Broward counties
  - Los Angeles program forthcoming





# Board Matter Request #4

Evaluate, under the existing Virginia Maintenance Code, **what options exist**, including at the state level, to ensure buildings are proactively maintained under State Code

- Limited authorities under maintenance code – County program is complaint-based only.
- Optional authority for rental properties – Compelled inspections.
- DHCD is in the early stages of evaluating options to address structural building concerns.



# How would the Board like us to proceed?

- Continue the current complaint-based system.
- Fairfax County staff will seek opportunities to participate in DHCD's consideration process.
- Augment the current complaint-based system with a proactive outreach campaign to encourage property owners to manage properties appropriately.
- Other suggestions?

